

# SAN DIEGO READY TO LEARN

Funders support  
youngest learners'  
success | [Page 3](#)

## OUR NEWEST STAFF MEMBER

A library homecoming  
for Chief Marketing &  
Public Affairs Officer  
Jenny Mehlow | [Page 9](#)



# A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Patrick Stewart welcomes IPLFC attendees to San Diego.

Dear Library Supporter,

We started our summer by hosting the International Public Library Fundraising Conference (IPLFC) in the beautiful San Diego Central Library @ Joan A Irwin Jacobs Common, welcoming nearly 250 library fundraising folks from across North America (*Read on Page 5*). The Carnegie Corporation of New York was a conference sponsor and I took them on a site visit of the building and showcased several of the innovative library programs happening inside. Our history with this organization dates back to 1902, when Andrew Carnegie funded his first public library in California – our San Diego Public Library.

On June 10, Carnegie announced that the Library Foundation SD was awarded a \$450,000 grant from their *Pillars of Education and Democracy* program. These funds will continue our relationship with Carnegie and support *DiscoverU* and *Adult Online High School* – two San Diego Public Library programs that promote college readiness and access, positively impacting higher education attainment and employment rates throughout San Diego. I've known

the impact of these two programs for San Diegans and am pleased to see Carnegie saw it, too.

Throughout the three-day conference, I heard from a lot of library fundraisers dealing with budget shortfalls and challenges, similar to ours in San Diego. When I stood at the podium in City Council Chambers this spring asking, yet again, for no cuts to library hours, I felt a bit like Bill Murray in *Groundhog Day*. But, thanks to the overwhelming support of our library advocates, the Mayor and City Councilmembers heard loud and clear why our libraries matter to San Diegans, and it made a difference in the budget (*Read on Page 8*).

Thank you for supporting this work, and I hope you enjoy reading about the impact of your contributions.

Sincerely,



**Patrick Stewart**  
CEO, Library Foundation SD

LIBRARY FOUNDATION SD

## DR. SEUSS & SAN DIEGO FOUNDATION FUNDING

A funding partnership between the Dr. Seuss Foundation and San Diego Foundation, focused on San Diego's early readers, awarded \$50,000 to Library Foundation SD on March 26.

*Ready to Learn* is a program dedicated to providing young children with a strong foundation in reading and literacy. The Library Foundation was one of 17 San Diego nonprofits that received funds from the *Ready to Learn* initiative, which included the Monarch School Project, Words Alive!, and San Diego Rescue Mission. All grantees were recognized at a press conference in the Denny Sanford Children's Library at the Central Library.

These funds will support two library programs designed to ensure children have the tools and resources they need to thrive in kindergarten and beyond.

The *READY for 4<sup>th</sup>* initiative is baked into numerous early reading programs offered by the library, which all have the goal of giving children a better shot at success by ensuring they develop crucial

reading skills before entering 4<sup>th</sup> grade—when children transition from learning to read to reading to learn.

Research indicates that students who fall behind in reading at this stage of their education are four times more likely to drop out of school. By supporting early literacy efforts at the library, this program helps lay the groundwork for kids to build brighter futures.

For San Diego's youngest readers, the *1000 Books Before Kindergarten* program is about sharing books, singing, and engaging in conversations with young children to build their language skills and foster a love for reading. This fun and free program is simple and achievable. Reading just one book a day means reaching the goal in three years, setting children on the path to success long before they start kindergarten.

**Learn more:**

→ [sandiego.gov/1000books](https://sandiego.gov/1000books),  
or stop by a library location  
for a paper log.



Library Foundation staff were proud to join 16 other local grant recipients at the launch of *Ready to Learn*.



## LIBRARY FRIEND AND FOUNDATION TRUSTEE KNOWS THE IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINING SUPPORT

Even though Sam Yoeuth knew public libraries provided life-changing resources to her and her community, she noticed how critically underfunded they are. Determined to make a difference, she set out to change that.

As a first-generation Cambodian refugee, Sam grew up in an underserved community in Long Beach, California, and became a naturalized citizen at age 15. She credits her successful career today to the access and knowledge she gained at the library. Giving back to public libraries became important to her as an adult.

*"I don't believe I would have achieved the level of success in school and my career in engineering without the resources the library offered me."*

One way she has chosen to give back is by becoming a Library Foundation SD Sustainer. A Sustainer is a supporter who has set up automatic monthly or quarterly donations to the Library Foundation.

As a Sustainer, Sam reliably contributes to the Foundation's mission, helping the library provide patrons with resources and opportunities to be their best selves, just as it did for her. Sam has not forgotten the environment from which she came. In addition to being a Library Foundation SD Sustainer, she is a member of the

Friends of the San Diego Public Library, serves as a Director on the Friends Board, and is also the president of the Serra Mesa-Kearny Mesa Chapter. She has served as a Trustee for the Library Foundation since 2023 and recently became a Library Commissioner.

Sam's library story is a shining example of how public libraries not only uplift a community in the present but also for the future.

*"When people visit, they create new memories, enrich themselves, and—over time—they can draw on those experiences to create something that circles back to the Library."*

Read more:  
→ [bit.ly/sam-sustainer](https://bit.ly/sam-sustainer)



LIBRARY FOUNDATION SD

## 2025 International Public Library Fundraising Conference

Library Director Misty Jones welcomes attendees to the conference.

## SAN DIEGO HOSTS HUNDREDS OF LIBRARY FUNDRAISERS IN THREE-DAY CONFERENCE

For three days in June, the Central Library was filled with library fundraising leaders from across the U.S. and Canada for the International Public Library Fundraising Conference. Library Foundation SD hosted the annual conference with a range of presentations including fundraising strategies and best practices for building partnerships with library patrons and advocates. There were also panel discussions about the numerous challenges facing public libraries today.

Our CEO, Patrick Stewart, moderated a powerful panel on "Challenges to Public Institutions and How to Challenge Back" featuring leaders from San Diego Unified School District, KPBS, and San Diego Public Library Director Misty Jones. The conversation explored how book bans, funding obstacles, and wavering public trust are impacting

public libraries, public schools, and public media—and more importantly, how we can challenge back and defend our public institutions.

The IPLFC coincided with the announcement of the City Council's amended city budget, which restored Monday hours for 16 of our 37 San Diego Public Libraries that had been cut in previous drafts.

The budget revision is a powerful reminder that the challenges discussed at IPLFC are not merely theoretical. They are happening right here, right now. We are grateful for all the passionate library champions who joined us for the IPLFC in San Diego. Together, we are not just fundraising but investing in the future of communities and showing that when we challenge back, we win.



# LIBRARY SHOP SD

f @LibraryShopSD

**CALLING ALL LIBRARY  
LOVERS, LITERARY  
OBSESSIVES, & BOOK NERDS!**

Library Shop proceeds support San Diego Public Libraries and many local vendors and artisans!

[libraryfoundationsd.org/shop](http://libraryfoundationsd.org/shop)

## LIBRARY SHOP TALK A RECORD-SETTING SAN DIEGO BOOK CRAWL

THANK YOU SAN DIEGO  
FOR SHOWING UP IN  
FORCE AND FOR MAKING  
THE BOOK CRAWL SUCH A  
TREMENDOUS SUCCESS!

A NOTE FROM  
LIBRARY SHOP SD  
MANAGER SCOTT  
EHRIG-BURGESS

### WHAT WE LOVE



Ribbon Dancer Ribbon  
Wand and Mini Wand



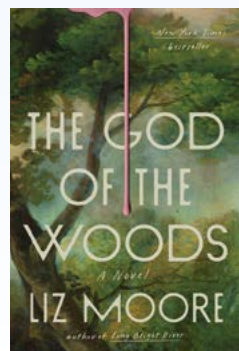
Dragon Book Nook &  
Bookend



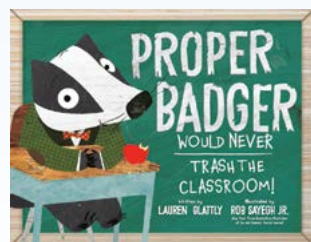
Read Banned Books  
T-Shirt



Checked Out by Katie  
Fricas



*The God of the Woods*  
by Liz Moore



*Proper Badger Would  
Never Trash the  
Classroom!* by Lauren  
Glattly, illustrated by  
Rob Sayegh Jr.

THIS IS MY NEW FAVORITE BACK-TO-SCHOOL READ-ALONG PICTURE BOOK. I LOVE THE DEVIOUS DELIGHT IN PROPER BADGER'S EYES AS HE CREATES CHAOS AND THE HORROR ON THE CHILDREN'S FACES. FOR CHILDREN AGES THREE TO SIX, FIND THE BOOK IN OUR STORE ON JULY 22ND.

A NOTE FROM  
LIBRARY SHOP  
SD BOOK BUYER  
SARAH BRADLEY



Scott Ehrig-Burgess with Dave Eggers (center) and Patrick Stewart at this year's San Diego Book Crawl. The internationally-acclaimed writer said our Book Crawl was the best in the United States. Way to go, San Diego! Let's keep the literary mission going!

In April, while non-readers struggled to get their steps in, a record number of readers stepped through the Shop for San Diego's largest EVER Book Crawl. This year's 14 participating stores were packed!

Amid the buzz of bookish supporters, the biggest shoes to fill were left by literary icon **Dave Eggers**, who shook hands at the Library Shop, gifted visitors proof pages from his forthcoming book, and spoke to us with inspiring passion about the need to protect libraries.

Summer will be busy at the Shop. Don't miss the "Where's Odi?" Scavenger Search all of July. Make this your Library Summer and fill out a passport for prizes. You can also catch Library Shop SD at the Pride Festival (July 19) and Comic-Con (July 24-27). To round out a 2025 Summer of Reading, join us and our friends at KPBS on August 23 for the San Diego Festival of Books (more on page 11).

**Upcoming Library Shop events:**  
→ [libraryfoundationsd.org/events](http://libraryfoundationsd.org/events)



## LIBRARY ADVOCATES REVERSE SOME DEVASTATING LIBRARY BUDGET CUTS

**During this year's budget season, San Diego Public Library advocates were needed more than ever, and we made a difference in a contentious budget season.**

Faced with an arduous deficit, Mayor Todd Gloria's initial city budget would have closed all 37 library locations on Sundays and Mondays.

"San Diego Public Library advocates made it crystal clear that they did not want the library to be closed two days a week. The postcards, emails, calls, and public comments at City Council meetings directly influenced the FY 26 budget the City Council approved — which restores

library hours on Mondays," said Patrick Stewart, CEO of the Library Foundation SD.

Our voices were heard, and the San Diego City Council approved a Fiscal Year 2026 Budget that restores Monday hours at 16 of the City's 37 branches but leaves the Sunday library closures in place.

"We are grateful for the thousands of advocates who spoke up and shared personal stories about the importance of library access to their communities. Libraries, in alliance with parks, recreation centers and the arts, are vital to support and strengthen San Diego," Stewart said.

→ Read more:  
[bit.ly/library-advocacy](https://bit.ly/library-advocacy)



A vocal group of advocates petitioned the Council to protect vital neighborhood services.

## MEET OUR NEW CHIEF MARKETING & PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER JENNY MEHLOW

**We are excited to welcome the newest Library Foundation SD team member**

Jenny is new to the Library Foundation but arrived with insight about the San Diego Public Library from her years as a senior public information officer for the City. Between 2017 and 2019 she promoted library programs including the expansion of the *Memory Lab* at the Central Library, the *Check Out Nature* backpacks, and was a part of the groundbreaking at the San Ysidro Library and the opening of the Mission Hills-Hillcrest/Harley & Bessie Knox Library.

Originally from Austin, Jenny studied Public Relations at Texas Tech University. Her career began at FleishmanHillard, an international PR agency, before she moved to Boston. While working for The Boston Foundation, she was introduced to the vital role of foundations and public-private funding partnerships. Since relocating to San Diego in 2004, she has managed communications for Sony Electronics, the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance, and Rady Children's Institute for Genomic Medicine. She's the mother of James, 13, and Shelby, 11.

*"I love working at the Foundation office at the Central Library, and it feels a bit like a homecoming. I'm looking forward to advocating for the library and the dedicated staff who keep this City department so vibrant."*







Joan Leigh Silva celebrates receiving her high school diploma with her family.

## DONOR-FUNDED SCHOLARSHIPS HELP ADULTS EARN HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMAS

### Congratulations to the inspiring 2024 & 2025 Adult High School Diploma Program graduates!

Through generous gifts from our donors, the Foundation is honored to provide the scholarship funding that makes this life-changing program free for all City of San Diego residents through the San Diego Public Library. When we invest in library programs like this, we invest directly in people and their futures.

The graduation ceremony highlighted the determination of these individuals. Graduates shared stories of juggling work, family responsibilities, and

studies, yet persevering to reach this milestone. Their advice to future students was clear: stay with it, because success is possible no matter when you start.

The auditorium was filled with balloons, smiles, and proud family members as Val Hardie, retired READ/Literacy Services program manager, addressed the graduates about their journey and overcoming obstacles.

The success of these graduates exemplifies the Foundation's mission to strengthen communities through the San Diego Public Library system.

Learn more:  
 → [mysdpl.org/graduatehs](https://mysdpl.org/graduatehs)

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### WHERE'S ODI @ SDPL?

July 1 to 31 | All library locations

Odi the Coyote is hiding inside all 37 library locations in July. How many can you find? This popular Library Shop SD program returns with all-new button designs and prizes, including custom Odi lanyards.

Learn more: [bit.ly/wheresodi](https://bit.ly/wheresodi)

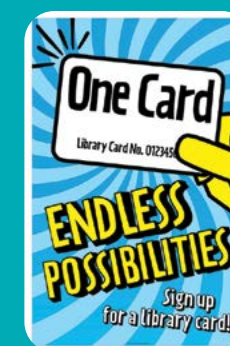


### KPBS SAN DIEGO BOOK FESTIVAL

10 am to 4 pm on  
Saturday, August 23 |  
University of San Diego

Visit the Library Shop SD booth at this free event featuring workshops, activities, photo booths, live entertainment, and award-winning authors. Registration is encouraged. Parking at USD is free.

Learn more: [bit.ly/sd-festival-of-books](https://bit.ly/sd-festival-of-books)



### LIBRARY CARD SIGN- UP MONTH September

It may be compact, but it expands the user's horizons. September is the time San Diego joins libraries nationwide to promote library card sign-ups and the power and perks of the card.



### MATCHBOOK STORY CONTEST

October 1 through  
November 15

Our annual very short story writing contest opens to entries on October 1.

Learn more: [bit.ly/matchbook-story](https://bit.ly/matchbook-story)



### BANNED BOOKS WEEK

October 5 - 11

Stay tuned for details on library programming.



### M.L. RIO

7 pm on Monday,  
October 6 | Central  
Library's Neil Morgan  
Auditorium

A night of propulsive fiction and music with *New York Times* bestselling author M.L. Rio. Join us for a San Diego celebration of Hot Wax! This event is in partnership with Mysterious Galaxy Bookstore.

Purchase book: [bit.ly/rio-sdpl](https://bit.ly/rio-sdpl)



PO Box 120391  
San Diego, CA 92112

[NAME]  
[ADDRESS]

## GRANTS BRING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SAN DIEGANS

In May, Library Foundation SD received a \$50,000 grant from Qualcomm supporting early literacy, lifelong learning, and workforce development.

The following month, On June 10, Carnegie Corporation of New York awarded \$450,000 to LFSD to support the San Diego Public Library's *DiscoverU* and *Adult Online High School Diploma* programs. We are one of just 11 grant recipients to receive funds from Carnegie's national *Libraries as Pillars of Education and Democracy Program*.

Stay tuned for updates on how this support benefits the San Diego Public Library in our next Impact Update.



*Library Foundation SD hosts a Carnegie Corporation of New York site tour.*